ANTI-BULLYING & ANTI-RACISM POLICY

INTRODUCTION:

At the Mount Eliza Soccer Club (the **"Club"**), we believe that all members of the club have the right to an environment free from intimidation, humiliation and hurt. We all share a responsibility to foster, promote and restore right relationships. We believe that bullying – whether about race, identity, ability or any other facet, is unacceptable and we as players, coaches, committee and parents all share a responsibility for preventing it. This policy provides clear procedures and strategies to prevent, reduce and respond to bullying.

SCOPE:

This policy applies to all members, volunteers, staff, visitors, and participants involved with the club including but not limited to players, coaches, officials, parents, and spectators.

DEFINITION:

- is deliberate and often repeated
- intends to cause fear, distress, hurt or harm to another
- is action by a more powerful individual or group over a less powerful individual or group

Bullying/Racism takes many forms, all of which will cause distress. Examples of bullying include:

- **Physical** hitting, pushing, tripping, kicking, spitting on others etc.
- **Verbal** teasing, using offensive names, ridiculing, spreading rumours etc.
- **Non-Verbal** writing offensive notes or graffiti about others, using e-mail or text messaging to hurt others, rude gestures etc.
- **Exclusion** deliberately excluding others from group, refusing to sit next to someone
- **Extortion** threatening to take someone's possessions, food or money etc.
- **Property** stealing, hiding, damaging or destroying property etc.
- **Cyber** any form of bullying/racism which is carried out through electronic means such as mobile phones, email, chat room, social networking, 'sms', web page etc.

How do we prevent bullying / racism at the club?

We believe, based on research, that prevention strategies through education that involve the whole club are more likely to reduce bullying/racism. Therefore, at the club we recognise that we all share the responsibility to prevent bullying/racism

At the club, we adopt the following strategies to prevent bullying/racism:

- Explicit modelling of positive behaviours by coaches at all levels
- Regularly recognising and acknowledging players who demonstrate appropriate behaviours that promote and restore right relationships
- Vigilant training and match day supervision

At the club players are encouraged to:

- take some positive action to stop the bullying/racism if they observe an incident
- report the bullying/racism incident to a coach as soon as possible
- make it clear to their peers that bullying/racism is not accepted

At the club coaches and committee are expected to:

- take some positive action to stop the bullying/racism when they observe an incident
- pass on information about any reported or observed bullying behaviours to the President for further action

At the club parents are encouraged to:

- listen to their child and encourage their child to speak to their coach or committee member at the club
- contact the Club President if they have a concern

How do we respond to bullying / racism at the club?

Bullying / racism is viewed as a major breach of the club Codes of Conduct and therefore follow up action will align with the club's Grievance and Complaints Policy.

Any reports of bullying/racism will be investigated, and appropriate action will be taken promptly. The response to bullying/racism will include:

1. guidance and other support for the recipient of the bullying/racism (e.g.re-skilling and re-teaching of strategies, resilience and social skills, counselling, conflict management skills, social networking etc.).
2. guidance and support for 'bystanders', 'supporters' and witnesses of the bullying/racism (e.g. intervention strategies etc.),
3. age appropriate and consistent sanctions for the person who is bullying/being racist. (e.g. consistent with the club's Grievance and Complaints Policy).

4. interventions and support for the person who bullied included in a Behaviour Support Plan (e.g. specific interventions developed to reduce the behaviour, teaching of replacement behaviours, reinforcers etc.).
5. where appropriate informing parents as stated in the policy and involving them in any action and follow up.

Procedures for investigating bullying/racism and follow up

In discerning appropriate responses to bullying/racism, the collective welfare of the club will be balanced with the individual needs of the person concerned.

- Preliminary interview(s) will be conducted to ascertain the specific nature of the bullying/racism. These interviews should be with individuals initially (i.e. person being bullied, people witnessing bullying/racism, person engaging in bullying/racist behaviour, coaches etc.).
- The initial interviews should focus on the safety of individuals. This should include:
    - a clear statement on the consequences if the bullying/racism continues or if there are any reprisals as a result of the reporting of the incident.
    - immediate preventative actions that will be implemented to avoid further incidents.

Decisions will be made as to the level of severity of the incident and whether the parents of those involved need to be informed.

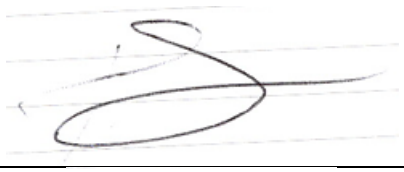
- Follow up interviews should focus on appropriate strategies to assist and support all involved.
- A record of the separate interviews should be kept and entered into Child Safe records
- Regular monitoring and follow up with the people involved is necessary at training and match days.
- Any further recurrence of bullying/racism may result in an issue of warning re suspension and could lead to the implementation of suspension procedures and, if necessary, removal of the player from the club through de-registration

Review and Updates:

This Anti-Bullying and Anti-Racism Policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure its effectiveness and relevance. Amendments or updates may be made as necessary, with notice provided to all relevant parties.

Acknowledgement:

By participating at the club, all members, volunteers, staff, visitors, and participants agree to abide by this Anti-Bullying and Anti-Racism Policy and acknowledge their responsibility to uphold its guidelines

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